The Pagan Library

The Wren

Traditional

Be all here in love and peace
Be all here in this place
Of thee we will sing
In serving our king

Our king is well dressed
In the silks of the best
In ribbons so rare
No king can compare

We have travelled many miles
Over hedges and stiles
In search of our king
Unto you we bring

We have powder and shot
To conquer the lot
We have cannon and ball
To conquer them all

Oh, christmas is past
Twelfth tide is the last
And we bide you adeu
Great joy to the new

--

The wren boys tradition still lives in certain parts of ireland; in fact, each year, on st. Stephen's day, a festival is held at listowel. The wren boys place an effigy of a wren in the middle of a holly bush, which they then decorate. Dressed in bizzare costumes, they go from door to door, asking for money, and singing one of the many versions of this song.

The wren song (music)

The wren, the wren, the king of all birds,
St. Stephen's day was caught inthe furze;
Although he was little, his honor was great.
Jump up, me lads and give him a treat.

[chorus]
Up with the kettle and down with the pan
And give us a penny to bury the wren.

As i was gone to killenaule
I met a wren upon the wall;
Up with me wattle and knocked him down.
And brought him into carrick town.

[chorus]

Droolin, droolin, where's your nest?
"`tis in the bush that i love best;
In the tree, the holly tree,
Where all the boys do follow me.

[chorus]

We followed the wren three miles or more,
Three miles or more, three miles or more,
We followed the wren three miles or more,
At six o'clock in the morning.

[chorus]

We have a little box under me arm,
Under me arm, under me arm,
We have a little box under me arm;
A penny a tuppence will do it no harm.

[chorus]

Missus clancy's a very good woman,
A very good woman, a very good woman,
Missus clancy's a very good woman:
She gave us a penny to bury the wren.

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Quote of the moment:

Greetings, lowly citizen. I seek your PEZ!

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